

Deer Management Plan Stakeholder Meeting #3 (8/26/16)

Stakeholders Present

Cody Hodson (Black Hills Sportsmen's Club)
Dale Johnson (South Dakota Youth Hunting Adventures Board/Mule Deer Foundation)
Rebecca Newton (Belle Fourche, Bureau of Land Management)
Kyle Holt (South Dakota Department of Agriculture)
Dave Eichstadt (Beadle County Sportsmen's Club)
Chris Hesla (South Dakota Wildlife Federation)
Andy Vandel (High Plains Wildlife Association)
Bob Waterbury (West River Landowner/Outfitter)
Ceci Steen (West River Landowner/Outfitter)
Jodie Anderson (South Dakota Cattleman's Association)
Brenda Forman (South Dakota Ag Utility)
Russ Roberts (West River Landowner/Outfitter)
Boyd Schulz (US Fish & Wildlife Service)
Jason West (East River Landowner)
Kerry Burns (US Forest Service, Black Hills)
David Niemi (West River Landowner)
Scott Philips (Rancher, SDGFP Commissioner)
Jim Spies (SDGFP Commissioner)

SDGFP Staff Present

Tom Kirschenmann (Deputy Director of Wildlife)
Chad Switzer (Wildlife Program Administrator)
Andy Lindbloom (Senior Big Game Biologist)
Kevin Robling (Big Game Biologist)
Steve Griffin (Big Game Biologist)
Scott Lindgren (Regional Supervisor – NE Region)
Josh Delger (Regional Terrestrial Resources Supervisor – SE Region)
John Kanta (Regional Terrestrial Resources Supervisor – West River)
Keith Fisk (Wildlife Damage Management Program Administrator)
Cindy Longmire (Human Dimensions Specialist)
Mark Ohm (Regional Supervisor – Central Region)
Nathan Baker (Regional Terrestrial Resources Supervisor – Central Region)
Ron Skates (Tribal Liaison)

Open to Questions Regarding Last Stakeholder Meeting

Last time we met, public land acres seemed high, what is considered public land?

- GFP response: Public Lands include state and federal lands (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Corps Of Engineers, Game Production Areas, State Park and Rec Areas, School and Public Lands)
 - Walk-In Areas are not considered public land.

- WIAs are private lands that allow public hunting access.

Reminder of Purpose of Stakeholder Meetings

Tom Kirschenmann: handout of public comments given to group

- Recognize other members of public have ideas that should be shared with the group.
- SDGFP trying to be open and transparent, handout is not being shared to take sides but rather share information.
- Reminder to stakeholders to be open to ideas and continue courtesy and open dialogue.
- Changes will happen but changes will not come from everything that is discussed during these meetings.
- Stakeholder meetings are held because SDGFP wants to hear all sides of the issues we are talking about.

License Allocation Clarifications

GFP provided the members a handout comparing the different licenses and percentage of licenses issued to landowners across the state.

- How many landowners applied for licenses? – refer to handout
 - GFP Clarification: Landowner cannot have both a Landowner Preference and a Landowner Own Land License; landowners usually seek the Landowner Preference license first.
- How many Landowner Preference licenses sold? – refer to handout
- GFP response: 50% of licenses are allocated to Landowner Preference, but usually 50% allocation is not met.
- GFP response: 50% of licenses went to landowners in SE region.
 - Only about ¼ of statewide units meet 50% going to landowners.
 - If landowners get a license on their own land, it does not impact licenses available to other hunters.
 - Landowner own land harvest is considered when setting up number of licenses available for next year.
- What are the stats for how many people get buck tags East and West River?
 - Can SDGFP limit that you only get a tag for one side of the river?
 - GFP response: Most West River units have leftover licenses so people could get an additional tag for West River.
 - GFP response: It's hard to tease out what percent didn't draw their first choice, stats would have to consider all weapon tags.
- What is the comparison of people getting first choice tags versus hunters getting multiple tags?
- For a hunter who resides in Gregory County, is there a higher portion of those hunters with both an East River and West River "any deer" archery license because they reside near the Missouri River?
- GFP response: In 2015, approximately 9% (~2,024 hunters) of archery hunters got both an East and West River "any deer" license, 2015 archery license success averaged 28%, 38 non-residents obtained both a West and East River "any deer" license.
- Continue above with Group – an archery hunter can get both an East River and West River "any deer" license or only a statewide "any deer" license.

Landowner Licenses

- Suggestions from a member to offer a 0% license allocation for Landowner (LO) preference and completely eliminate LO preference licenses.
 - Supports Landowner-own land (LOL) licenses
 - Wants open opportunity for all hunters
 - LO should be allowed to hunt off their land because they are raising the deer
- Clarification that landowners should not be penalized and doesn't agree with eliminating landowner preference.
- LO should be able to get more deer because the LO puts up with a lot and raise the deer; people don't appreciate all the things landowners go through with deer on their property.
- Member stated that it seems like more units have met the 50% LO preference allocation in the last couple of years because SDGFP has issued fewer licenses recently.
- GFP responded by noting that 50% LO preference allocation is dependent upon the unit
 - In 2015, 16 East River units met the 50% allocation. Not real common to meet 50% West River, only 4 in 2015, most likely because larger parcels with fewer landowners competing for LO preference.
- It was suggested that LOL license should be eligible to hunt on all private land in SD not restricted to just their land, every landowner should be guaranteed to get a tag and hunt private land anywhere in that unit.
- For LO preference license, LO should be able to contend with general hunting public in application process to hunt on public land.
- LO tag should include WIA and public land because deer are likely to move across public and private land East River because of smaller parcel size, West River its ok to only hunt private because land is larger parcels.
 - Need to show appreciation for what LO does for deer
- Not likely to find a LO that wants to hunt public
- If I started hunting deer on my private land and the deer crosses onto public land, why can't I continue to hunt on public?
 - What does LO get from taking care of deer? Why should LO be negatively impacted to hunt deer? Feels that it is a punishment to not be able to hunt on public.
- In the northwest corner of state, a lot of intermingled private and public land, going to be hard to know who owns the land while hunting.
- GFP noted legislative discussions on public and private access for LO type licenses.
 - LOL is covered under statute to only be on your private property; to include all private land access in that unit would take legislative approval. GFP Commission has authority to allow up to 50% allocation for LO preference licenses; 160 acres is in statute but discussion has come up regarding the size. Changing the size restriction will change the number of LOs eligible for LO licenses.
- One member noted that 160 acres is currently in both LO license types, consider increasing the acreage size to contend with 50% allocation.
- If you increase acreage, land East River goes for more money; do you have to take land value into account?
 - GFP responded that currently license allocation does not account for land value, just size.

- You don't want people to buy 20 acres and be able to get LO licenses.
- People that have 40 acres of land managed for wildlife ask why they can't get a tag?
- Member commented that the system needs to reduce the burden on LOs working the land, not for LOs buying land for recreational purposes.
- How many people are allowed to apply for LO preference?
 - GFP answered that applicants are limited to immediate family living at home that meet 160 acre parcel size limitation.
- Wording is meant to target LOs who are working the land.
- Doesn't want to minimize LO contribution to wildlife; LO licenses needs to be more than 40 acres because 40 acres does not fully support all needs of wildlife.
 - Should get LO preference if you are providing what wildlife needs; you can argue that a small parcel of CRP provides better habitat than a large parcel of land that is not well managed for wildlife; no one can make a sustainable living on 40 acres.
- GFP noted that in the survey from 2014, 60% of surveyed deer license applicants said 160 acres was just about right; non-landowners and landowners were both surveyed.
- GFP stated that we are not going to come to an agreement today, but want to share ideas with the Commission.
- GFP: LO licenses have been in existence since the 1980s; are we starting to see push back on LO preference now or has it always been an issue.
 - More of an issue now since licenses numbers have been reduced in recent years.
- In 1970s, hunters and landowners couldn't get a tag every year, only every other or every third year.
- In bad years we don't hunt, if overabundance of deer, then they tailor their hunting to target the species of overpopulation.
- Number of deer taken by LO, does it significantly affect overall abundance?
 - GFP: Depends on the unit, some units it's pretty insignificant, East River its more significant, pretty low West River, have to factor in other seasons as well.
 - If impact is so low, why would you want to change it?
- Alternative, LO preference reduce from 50% to 25%, West River would have limited impact, East River and Black Hills would be impacted to a greater extent.
- Reducing percentage would likely get some push back East River; Beadle County sportsman group would advise against taking away from LO preference.
- This is a topic of discussion every year, why? It's not a new topic.
 - GFP: LO preference comes up because it impacts the number of licenses available to the general hunter. If 50% are allocated to landowners, then less licenses are available for the general hunter to get a license even if they have several preference points for that unit.
- GFP: 50% of licenses do not automatically go to LOs. In 2015, only 22 units statewide met the 50% LO allocation.
- SDGFP needs to better educate the public on the license allocation breakdown.
- If public understands better, may get more LOs to go for reduced LOL license instead of LO preference.
- Drawing statistics are available online, but need to make it easier for public to see and understand.

Hunter Profile

- GFP:
 - If a hunter got multiple tags, could have gotten tags from leftovers or unrestricted seasons.
 - Was mentioned that 3,500 people got 3+ licenses which equates to 11,000 deer licenses.
- How many hunters were unsuccessful in their first draw for East River, West River, Black Hills, include break down by resident vs non-resident.
 - GFP answers:
 - ER resident applicants: Total: 34,806; Successful: 20,056; Unsuccessful: 14,750
 - WR resident applicants: Total: 20,797, Successful: 11,310; Unsuccessful: 9,487
 - WR nonresident applicants: Total: 3,505; Successful: 1,389; Unsuccessful: 2,116
 - BH resident applicants: Total: 13,804, Successful: 3,945; Unsuccessful: 9,139
 - BH nonresident applicants: Total: 1,191; Successful: 317; Unsuccessful: 874
 - Hard to determine what first choice is for applicant
 - East River is most preferred followed by West River, Black Hills, archery

Hunting Fees on Private Land

- Comment which supports a limit to archery, would like to be able to transfer landowner tags to hunters coming on to land to get some added income to offset cost of deer damage. Some year's landowner doesn't use personal tag and some years none of their hunters are successful at drawing a license but allows hunters that have a license to access property for free. Explained they could make more money having the hunter come stay with them.
- Inflate price of hunting and access will limit number of people being able to hunt on private land, going to lose hunters if they have to start paying to access land, lots of extra fees besides the license itself.
- Recreational landowners are competing with working landowners to buy land and recreational guys are making a profit by charging hunters.
- In Wall area suggesting that outfitters harassing deer on public land to push them into private land so that hunters would have to pay an access fee.
- If you limit everyone to just public land, the land gets hammered and scattered small parcels of public land won't have any deer during hunting season.
- Member expressed issue with claim that landowners charge hunting access fee, states that not all landowners are charging access, landowners have right to make a living off of their land.
 - Member suggested there is a slow trend to lease ground to hunting parties instead of working your land, going to raise fees in that area so landowners keep raising fees, will lose hunters and in long run could limit abilities of SDGFP to manage deer.
- Landowner tags are an appreciation for tolerating deer, not a payment for operating land, shouldn't be a transferable.
 - Member suggested to write me a check to offset the deer problem if I can't get a transferrable license to offset taxes for land, would be nice if landowner could get some income from tags available to people living on their property to transfer to hunters that provide some income.

- GFP responded that it would cost millions of dollars to compensate a Landowner for wildlife damage and would not be financially feasible
- Member stated that people don't travel far anymore to hunt deer because travel is so expensive.

Archery Deer

- Discussion for setting a limit of any deer archery license
 - GFP: Over last 3 years, GFP hearing more from public that they want a cap. SDGFP saw a plateau of any deer license over the last 3 years with the increased fee, not much discussion after that.
 - Member suggested that since the current proportion of NR archers is 9.5%, set a 8% cap since the 8% seems to be working for rifle.
- Suggestions that further discussion is needed on non-resident archery hunters?
 - GFP provided non-resident number breakdown
 - NR archery "any deer" licenses are 9% of total archery, fairly consistent over the last 3 years, increased NR fee has dropped off number of NR hunters.
 - Member suggested the state should consider putting a cap on NR archery, 8% for rifle, would have to use previous year's archery to determine 8% to go to NR in current year.
- GFP: Special Buck – process to get recommendation for Special Buck, use previous years of any deer to be no more than 4% with a minimum limit of 500 licenses; if we go down this path with archery, would have to use previous years data or an arbitrary value to set quota.
- Member suggested most archery hunters do not go out with an outfitter, 75% success rate for the NRs they take out, there has to be a limit to NR archery, going to be more and more hunters coming here as other states start limiting their archery hunters.
 - Another member agreed that the state need to limit NR archery hunters.
- Member stated if SD sets a limit to NR archery, going to have angry outfitters but believes he is responsible enough to manage the deer, not out making money.
- Another member mentioned that their archery hunters want it brought up that they are in favor of limiting NR archery hunters, equipment is getting better so more deer will be harvested.
- Member stated lots of deer getting arrows that are not harvested by hunters, 28% is very low compared to how many deer actual die from archery hunters, some deer will survive arrow.
 - Member asked if SDGFP considers archery wounding loss?
 - GFP responded that male wounding loss is hard to factor because bucks aren't generally collared, we do have a wounding loss estimate for females.
- GFP: Seems that people are in general supportive of limiting NR archery.
 - Member stated he is opposed to limiting archery tags, at this point we are fine but if deer numbers start to decline then consider limiting archery.
 - Member agreed archery should be limited, let's get it figured out now; another member agreed and would like a quota for both NR and Resident archers.
 - Another member expressed support for cap on both Resident and NR.
 - Another member suggested a cap only for NR, not for Resident.
 - Recommendation to cap at unit level to better manage deer across the state.

- Member mentioned the need to reduce pressure on public land, can be resolved by limiting number of tags for an area, want to provide a quality hunt, 8% doesn't have a significant impact on deer population.
- Limiting tags, limits opportunities, not a lot of youth coming in to hunting, nationwide youth don't want to hunt, not as big an issue in SD compared to rest of country, kids living in Rapid City don't have any idea what goes on outside of Rapid City, concerned that limiting opportunity is going to make it impossible for youth to be able to hunt.
- Member responded to the above suggestion by stating if you manage places and give kids a quality experience, you will keep the kids you have and draw in more, have to teach them conservation not just opportunities, can't throw a pile of people out there and get a good hunt.
- Follow up response was if you just get kids outdoors, they get into hunting other species or fishing, deer hunting opportunity at least got them outdoors, makes them want to be a conservationists.

Antlerless Deer Management

- PowerPoint Presentation by GFP
- Antlerless Deer Management Group Discussion
 - GFP explained that within a unit, if antlerless firearm licenses are available, antlerless archery is available.
 - Member stated a hunter can only get 1 antlerless archery tag, but number of licenses are unlimited; in Beadle County areas with deer and some without deer, if multiple tags available for firearms season, free antlerless tags are available.
 - GFP responded that youth have not been limited, but has been discussed.
 - Youth can harvest an any antlerless deer.
 - Approximately 600 mule deer does were harvested statewide last year for youth.
 - Youth could harvest 5 historically, now only can get 1 any antlerless deer tag.
 - It was stressed to keep a close eye on mule deer harvest.
 - It was stressed the need to give youth the opportunity, is huge number of tags being sold?
 - GFP pointed out that approximately 1,000 mule deer does harvested last year, 600 were from youth, 5,300 youth licenses purchased last year for 2,800 deer (does not include Mentored Youth season); 400 mule deer does were from any deer tags.
 - Question asked if GFP can you control where mule deer are being harvested?
 - GFP responded that we can estimate where mule deer are being harvested but tag is statewide; 600 mule deer will not limit the population statewide, removing mule deer from youth licenses has been discussed.
 - Support of youth hunting but concerned with mule deer harvest
 - GFP stated 5 mule deer does were estimated harvested in Unit 2C in 2015.
 - Question whether 1,000 mule deer does being harvested annually OK according to SDGFP?

- GFP responded that in some areas mule deer population are not growing fast, but some areas are predicted to have 30% growth. SDGFP feels that 1,000 does is acceptable; best management at the firearm unit level.
- What is best management strategy level?
 - GFP stated that Data Analysis Unit (DAU) level is best approach for some things, but not all.
- Suggested that it is a sin to harvest mule deer doe in West Sully County for any type of season until the mule deer population is at better level.
- Try to get kids on private land and speaking with landowners, kids ask landowners what deer they want and the kids to harvest what is requested, mule deer vs. whitetail deer, doe vs buck; some areas have large population of mule deer where they could be harvested; if hunting on private land, please ask landowner what they should target for shooting; important for landowner and hunter to discuss target species/sex.
- Question asked whether DAU would give more or less control to antlerless management?
- Suggested that as far as youth are concerned, breaking down by species to unit would limit opportunity for youth hunting, some units only have mule deer or only have whitetail deer; if you want to really manage a specific unit, you would have to create 3 tag types to cover mule deer vs. whitetail deer harvest.
- Member stated that youth is a small enough pool of hunters that mule deer can probably withstand it. If you open muzzleloader and general archery to any deer, mule deer population would probably not be able to withstand youth; youth should be the only season that could harvest a mule deer doe.
- GFP responded that in future there may be the need to add firearm any antlerless tag because at some point mule deer population levels will become socially unacceptable; how do we eventually incorporate antlerless mule deer harvest?
 - A member suggested to make a mule deer specific tag instead of an any deer tag; any deer tag does not adequately manage mule deer population, don't know if whitetail deer or mule deer will be harvested, not a proponent of any deer tag; for firearms want mule deer buck and doe to be accepted.
 - GFP can look at averages to see how many mule deer will be harvested with any deer tags, GFP is able to adequately predict mule deer harvest, hunters have mixed feelings towards species specific tags.
- GFP asked the question if GFP pursues data analysis unit (DAU) management level strategies, would hunters be for or against making antlerless tags specific to a DAU and not a statewide license?
 - One member thinks it's a good idea and hunters will understand this process.
 - Member stated it would limit the number of tags sold, but better able to manage populations.
 - Others responded it would better management at DAU level, still allows opportunity, but better management control.
 - Public would like it because it would be more consistent from year to year as long as DAU boundaries don't change.
 - Question asked if boundaries would change?

- GFP stated that boundaries have the potential to change.
- Statement that in 2004 the antlerless tags were allocated at the unit level.
- A member stated that we need to expect a little more out of the public to understand DAU boundaries, DAUs are pretty simple and the public should be able to understand them.
- Member stated DAU is easy to understand.
- Some DAUs are mostly tribal.
 - GFP stated that tribes are consulted when setting tag allocations and harvest numbers.
- GFP also mentioned that if we don't need to restrict people, SDGFP could combine DAU's.
- Topic of how antlerless units are managed for archery, muzzleloader, youth seasons which are currently open to "statewide"
 - GFP stated antlerless areas are currently unlimited, and asked the question do we want to put in a quota at this time and allow for leftover DAU licenses to be picked up if available?
 - Members assumed that if you create DAUs, they would have a quota.
 - GFP stated if we are well above population objective, would allow for unlimited harvest at DAU level.
 - Question asked if divided into DAU without a quota, what happens when everyone applies for a single DAU, what is the point of having DAUs if it's unlimited?
 - GFP: History supports that hunters will spread themselves out.
 - GFP responded by stating OK with people picking up leftovers license if biological quota is set correctly.
- GFP asked what quota should be made available to archery, muzzleloader, and youth licenses?
 - GFP provided information that 85% of harvest is from firearm seasons.
 - Suggestion from 2 members to set a quota for non-rifle and don't care what weapon they use – at least for antlerless tags, still have specific seasons with time limits for specific season.
 - GFP responded that we want people to harvest deer when population is high, unsure how hunter's choice would work.
 - Members mentioned if weapons choice, then hunter has 3 months to get a deer instead of a few weeks, if they still can't harvest a deer, then quota may be set too high.
 - GFP responded the interest of a system that provides flexibility when population exceeds social tolerance levels.
 - Another member suggestion was to create a tiered system so that hunter can harvest by weapon, let SDGFP manage number of licenses per weapon.
 - Question asked if you don't want all deer taken in one season, if antlerless tag is valid for all seasons, what is the problem?

- GFP also described the challenges to determine success if we establish a weapon of choice tag, deer harvested per tag type gets success; by pooling all season tag types together you reduce overall opportunity.
- GFP also mentioned by keeping archery and muzzleloader separate from firearms, able to provide more opportunities to hunters for all weapons.
- Member stated that history has proven itself that the current system is best system.
- Member said antlerless whitetail deer need to get harvested; not selling all tags so how is that reducing opportunity?
- GFP responded in units where we aren't selling all tags you aren't losing opportunity, but in areas where there is competition for tags, lumping all weapon types will reduce chances to get tags.
- GFP also suggested that it is a big assumption that allowing hunters choice is going to meet harvest goals.
- People go where they have access to hunt, some people are likely to go far, but others go where they know where to hunt.
 - A member stated that a hunter has the ability to travel and knock on doors to get access.
 - People don't want to travel or ask people for permission.
 - Landowners are likely to let a hunter come in and shoot a doe.
 - GFP pointed out from other stakeholder meetings that sportsmen are not inclined (don't have time to scout or get permission) to get access, want to know where they can hunt opening day without hassle.
 - Member responded by stating this is not a deer management issue that hunters don't want to get permission, that's a social issue.
 - Member stated that hunting does in eastern SD is harder; landowners don't want deer hunters messing with their pheasant hunting.

Trophy Buck Management & Quality Hunts

- PowerPoint Presentation by GFP
 - Managing for quality vs quantity issue.
 - Genetics, age, and nutrition are the biggest impacts to trophy antlers.
 - Surveys indicate that hunters want more deer and bigger deer – not easy to get both.
 - Hunter Survey 2016 – motivation of why people hunt → quality deer accounts for 35% important, 17% very important.
 - Bringing home meat, spending time with family, and experience were most important, not quality bucks.
 - Antler point restrictions – a lot has been done in the west for mule deer point restrictions, have not seen a change in older age bucks in harvest.
 - Some states do feel that restrictions protect young deer but by and large, restrictions don't effectively manage for trophy deer.
 - Season structure is more effective, such as short seasons decrease harvest so better survival, or limit number of hunters which limit number of deer being harvested so they get older.

- In SD, deer management is geared towards maximum hunter opportunity and manage towards social tolerance of deer on landscape.
- Are hunters willing to reduce chance to hunt if it means a better chance at a trophy buck?
 - 35% are not willing, 40% are willing to hunt less.
- GFP's view of limited access areas are to manage for a quality hunt (low hunter density) and not for trophy deer management.
- 2015 Limited Access Units (LAUs) success of 83% with WR success at 61%.
- Hunter opinion surveys are mostly neutral regarding LAU's, more support for LAU's than oppose; hunters pretty neutral to limiting LAU to non-firearms weapons.
- Free permits are required for non-firearm licenses on LAU's.
- Hunters mostly neutral to creating new LAU's, more support than opposition for creating new LAU's.
- Hunters strongly support finding better ways to manage licenses.
- Trophy Buck & Quality Hunt Group Discussion
 - Member drew Little Moreau tag, most positive hunting experience he ever had on public land; wasn't successful with harvest but companions were.
 - Pushing for Little Bend LAU archery unit.
 - GFP stated the free access permits are issued to gauge pressure of unlimited seasons.
 - A member strongly supported the limited access areas.
 - Another member had a hunter voice that he is in favor of LAU's.
 - General support for LAU areas with large public lands.
 - Suggestions received by one member include to see more restrictions for archery in LAU's; 1 hunter per 10 acres would be a good start for limitation; he has not spoken with a hunter who is against waiting for a chance to hunt a quality area, willing to wait if it has less pressure and better quality hunt; don't want LAUs everywhere.
 - Another member shared that he thinks LAU's are wonderful, talking to people, if taking big tracts, where are the rest of the hunters going to go? Some people don't like them because it takes away access, if quality of landscape isn't good for deer, leave it unrestricted, but high quality habitat with a lot of hunting pressure should have a LAU.
 - It was pointed out that LAU's were not strongly supported in recent hunter opinion survey.
 - One member stated that in almost every survey, indication that hunters don't care one way or the other about questions; what does neutral mean and why are people selecting neutral?, see it for all kinds of questions.
 - GFP staff responded that some hunters don't know what a LAU is because they have never been on one so they are neutral.
 - One member asked about point restrictions, any stats on young deer vs. older deer being more successful at reproduction?
 - GFP biologists stated that research has shown that very few bucks are required to breed does, young bucks can get the job done.
 - Question asked whether people are shooting more quality bucks on LAU's?

- GFP biologists responded that we don't collect age data anymore, so GFP doesn't know. Getting a statistically valid sample would be difficult and may not be cost effective.
- Member indicated if we kick people out of a public land area, it's going to increase pressure in surrounding areas; supports LAU.
- One member suggested that if a hunter didn't have a place to go, he would likely hit these places that are now LAU's.
- GFP staff indicated that hunter densities on LAU's are high but not nearly as high as before.
- Any discussion of access permits being determined by first come first serve? More like in Montana?
 - GFP indicated we have controlled hunting access areas (CHAPs) that limit first come, first serve or make reservation online via GFP website for a specific date.
- A member shared that CHAP's are a very nice experience as well, you know you are 1 of 5 on the landscape, you know where the other hunters are.
- One member stated that a CHAP is a better alternative than having to wait 3 years for a LAU license.
- Staffing a first come, first serve place may not be feasible, Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access Area (LOWAA) is a good system but heavily manned, LOWAA landowner happy with success; would other landowners be happy with this for big game?

Raffle and Auction Hunting Licenses

- PowerPoint Presentation
 - Currently there is an auction license for a bighorn sheep and a raffle elk license in South Dakota.
 - Other states (Nebraska, Utah, etc.) hold raffles/auctions for deer licenses.
- Raffle and Auction Group Discussion
 - Is the purpose just money?
 - GFP responded that proceeds could go directly to deer research and habitat, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) funds more projects in SD than what they make off of the auction license.
 - One member suggested that demand has to be there for people wanting to buy the tag, deer probably not going to draw a big ticket price in South Dakota. Will have to account for expenses to advertise, may have to open to non-residents to get more interest.
 - Another member stated that they are not against auction and raffle tickets, but not sure that SD can generate enough interest in deer to offset costs to set up auction/raffle; more likely to work as a fundraiser.

Stakeholder Topics

- Stakeholder member presented the group with his alternative license allocation proposal.
 - Mandatory reporting, initial assessment that we should have 100% reporting with all tags issued; after talking with other states, game agencies do not need 100% response rate to get accurate numbers.

- If hunter doesn't want to participate in deer management by responding to the survey, they should forfeit their chance for a 1st draw license the following year.
- Quota of 2 any deer tags for every hunter in SD, max of 1 for non-residents; go through a 3 part application process, hunter picks the area and weapon.
- If you draw your first choice license, you lose your preference points.
- Member asked the proposer why penalize a hunter for wanting to hunt a special place.
- Proposer stated the way quotas are set, every hunter should get 2 tags.
- Opposing member stated hunters won't be able to get a tag where they want to hunt.
- Proposing member stated his system of wiping out preference tags will make it easier in the long run to get a tag where you want it.
- Opposing member stated if you take away preference for CSP, I would never get to hunt in CSP; I don't have one preferred place to hunt, why should I have to give something up, 90% of hunters get a buck in SD, seems like a good system.
- Proposing member stated that down to 2 licenses for residents and 1 license for NR; allows biologists population goals to be met, puts a quota on everything so that there is no unlimited season; right now you can apply for 6 preference point system, have to pay for each preference point.
- Proposal would distribute buck licenses more evenly across state, going to increase quality of deer across landscape.
- Landowner-own-land license should be given to landowners to hunt on their property at reduced rate. But if a landowner wants to hunt somewhere else, they can apply like everyone else.
- Remove current landowner preference rules. Don't give landowners preference for 50% of draw quota; landowner limited to 2 bucks just like everyone else.
- Large parcels of public land should be made into own units with restrictions to archery licenses; should give quality hunts to these lands similar to on private land.
- You can buy an archery stamp along with firearm tag so that you can get your deer for that unit, if you harvest a deer, you are done with that tag regardless of the weapon you used.
- Remove option to have a statewide archery tag.
- Non-Residents (NRs) can hunt east river, revenue from NRs, wants 8% quota to stay the same, NRs pay for habitat improvement and quality hunts for everyone.
- NRs should have access to East River deer, West River shouldn't have to foot the bill for deer habitat across the state.
- Want equal opportunity for all hunters.
- Overall Summary: Everyone has better opportunity to hunt first choice, 2 buck limit will improve overall quality of bucks, still able to manage antlerless tags as currently doing.
- Proposing member also stated everyone with 9 points draw before people with 8 points, 8 points before 7, etc.; 75% of tags issues to straight preference point system, 25% of tags go for new hunters or hunters with minimal preference points.
- GFP stated that the proposed changes provides department with alternative ideas.
- Another member suggested to give hunter the choice between East River and West River, maybe hunter will just choose one side of river and spend more time hunting; having license on

both sides of river may take from other hunters whose first choice was one side of the river; people hunting on one side of river just because they can, not their primary hunting choice.

- Proposing member stated from a statistical standpoint, if you make people choose, your odds improve for getting a tag in the unit you really want; not taking away opportunity because you are drawing for a tag that you actually want to use; talking with people that get multiple tags – I normally only kill one or 2 bucks, don't fill your pocket with tags, go on a hunt that you actually want to do; give others opportunity to hunt.
 - If hunter only shoots 1 deer instead of 6, more opportunity for other hunters to get a deer.
- A member also mentioned that in respect to the preference point system you never really know when you are going to get a tag, may take 1-8 years to get a tag, in some cases you may only want 1 tag but random drawing could leave you with 3 tags in one year.
- GFP staff indicated results from the deer survey that people want to get their preferred tag but they don't want SDGFP to change license drawing system.
- GFP staff also shared that for East River and West River you have a pretty good idea for firearms how many preference points you will need to draw.
- Question asked how did second tier impact successful draw of tags, person with more points has greater chance of getting tags than someone with fewer tags?
 - 2+ preference points had a higher success of getting preferred tags for East River and West River firearms seasons.
 - Did not make a significant difference in those units hard to draw for such as Black Hills any deer, muzzleloader any deer, and units where we have more applicants entering the two year preference pool than what is being removed.
 - GFP staff also shared if you had 2+ preference points you don't drop down to the 1+ category because there were no tags available for anyone at that point or everyone with 2+ points already drew a license; deer is not the same as the elk drawing.
- Tom Kirschenmann read petitions submitted by public to obtain thoughts from the members.
 - 2 submissions to Commission; Commission decided to deny both of the petitions so that stakeholders and agency could look into further.
 - John Altman Petition – seniors get reduced fee for antlerless tag (currently \$20.00 license fee).
 - Definition of a senior is 65.
 - One member suggested we should help seniors out any way you can, seniors have limited budget and do consume deer meat, recommend setting license fee at \$10.
 - Question asked how much does it cost to process an individual license?
 - Online licenses are very efficient, paper applications cost more.
 - Paper application: \$2-3 (not include cost to mail license).
 - Online application: Few cents (not include cost to mail license).
 - Another member stated if a senior is hunting, they have done it before, don't see why a break should be given, they will have all of the necessary equipment.
 - Was also asked if every senior would be eligible, would encourage further research, lots of seniors hunting now, who is really going to be eligible?

- Another member stated his preference of GFP putting more money into Sportsmen Against Hunger processing that goes towards feeding seniors rather than to reduce license fees.
 - One member stated the petition sounds like every senior should get reduced rate, hesitant to move in that direction.
 - Overall perspective was not much support for the request of the petition.
 - Spitzer petition – youth license, limited number of any deer on private property.
 - One member stated youth already able to apply for general antlerless any deer tag, they don't need an "any deer" license.
 - Adding a youth any deer tag doesn't seem necessary.
 - Kids are just as happy shooting antlerless deer as they would be shooting an antlered deer, doesn't see need for any deer tag.
 - General consensus – leave it antlerless only.
 - 3rd Discussion – able to have up to 5 licenses at end of 3rd draw – is 5 too high of a number?
 - This is a similar process for antelope and turkey.
 - One member stated it depends on how accurate the quota is, if you need to kill 300 deer, let them keep applying so that deer can be harvested.
 - Another comment seems like a lot of tags.
 - It was stated that this scenario limits someone from having a pile of tags before someone else gets a single tag.
 - Important to understand that after 3rd draw, its first come first serve.
 - GFP clarified that a hunter can get a tag in 1st draw for that season, have to skip 2nd, and can submit up to 4 applications for 3rd draw and end up with 5 licenses by the end of the 3rd draw for that season.
 - Several members recommended to limit the # of applications for 3rd draw to 2 instead of 5
- Why can't muzzleloader season start earlier in the year?
 - GFP shared the view from what has been heard from the public that having multiple openers on the same day is not very appealing.
 - One member stated that muzzleloader doesn't compete with firearms tags, easy to get access on private land for muzzleloaders because rifle is already over; thinks it's perfect the way it is.
 - It was asked if we can define a primitive weapon?
 - Another member stated they like where muzzleloader season is, gives landowners and deer a break after rifle season.
 - It was asked why GFP got away from iron sights?, muzzleloader is becoming less and less primitive, like it being its own late season as a primitive season, knock off 1 power scopes.